

TOWN OF MIDDLEBURY CONSERVATION COMMISSION

Rotary Small Meeting Room, First Floor  
Alternative Location- Planning Office, Second Floor  
Municipal Office Building  
77 Main Street, Middlebury

Monday, NOVEMBER 25, 2019  
4:30 – 6:00 PM

(DRAFT) MINUTES

I. Call to Order

Commission Members: Jeff Howarth, Andrew L'Roe, Kemi Fuentes-George, Judy Wiger-Grohs,  
Amy Sheldon

Town of Middlebury: Jennifer Murray

Citizen: George Klohck- Middlebury resident

Absent: Monica Przyperhart, Molly Anderson

II. Approval of minutes

September 23 2019- A. Sheldon motioned, A. L'Roe seconded- unanimously approved

(Need to add S to Judy's last name in Sept minutes)

October 2019- A. Sheldon motioned, K. Fuentes-George seconded- unanimously approved

III. Commission member updates

J. Wiger-Grohs: passed along citizen concerns about information sharing and making sure we are following Open Meetings Law- she sent out document to Commission with summary of Open meeting Law requirements.

The issue came up because residents of South Street were trying to find information from meeting, next meeting date.

In the future, note taker will send draft minutes directly to Chris English

Town staff will post minutes on website and agendas at physical locations

J. Murray: Residents should check the Select Board Packets for up-to-date information

A. L'Roe: Can post link for Google Drive on CC website, will send approved minutes

Agendas posted on website, other places?

A. L'Roe: Otter Creek Wetlands Reclassification update-

The wetlands reclassification steering committee will be meeting next week at ACRPC- a Middlebury College Geography student will be presenting results of calculations of buffer area

around Otter Creek wetlands areas in all towns with potential for reclassification. Andrew will continue gathering information about Middlebury wetland areas and present at next meeting.

J. Wiger-Grohs and M. Przyperhart (Not Present): Community Values Mapping and Results Presentation scheduled for **Tues, December 10, Town Offices, 5:30-6:30**

J. Murray printed 15 fliers- Judy and others will post and do additional advertising.

J. Wiger-Grohs will buy refreshments from Co-op with remaining funds, after the presentation the Selectboard is meeting so she will contact them to make sure they know.

J. Howarth: College Solar Farm proposal-

Encore (the solar company) sent a summary of alternative sites- there are a couple sites on South Street, a couple on Rte. 125 all on College-owned parcels

For South St. Ext site, they would have to extend 3-phase electrical wires almost a mile

There is a site off Exchange St, adjacent to 3-phase, that is in industrial use area, looks like a promising alternative.

J. Murray: Just talked to person from Encore to ask for overlay of solar panels (with reduced buffer) off Exchange St to show planning committee. The Planning Committee is reviewing new site at 10:30am, December 5, will get to Kathleen to add to SB agenda for following week.

Commission members should send comments to Jennifer before December 4th

A. Sheldon: Does the College own Brownfields? (No one is aware of any)

IV. Discussion: Conservation Plan (Jeff Howarth)

Jeff showed series of maps on [online ArcGIS site-](#)

(<https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/f5dc158c55ef41ed96e8deacf32f5229>)

Site is made up of a series of maps and descriptions, legends

First maps include topography, land use, parcel size, land use districts, conserved lands, College-owned parcels

Question: Does the protected land layer include all conservation easements? How often is the state land protected layer updated?

It was noted that None of the College lands are legally conserved- they have previously stated resistance to donating land or development rights without compensation.

Question: Is there a way to encourage the College to formally and legally conserve land? And would that be helpful?

Amy noted that the Resilience mission of the College needs to be broader than just energy,

Next maps show Hydric (wetland) soils as they related to current development & use/conservation status/college ownership- Jeff noted that map demonstrates Potential of Creek Road and South Street Wetland for "Conservation & Restoration District"

Additional maps show Prime and Statewide Agricultural Soils as they relate to current development/use/conservation status/college ownership

Concluding maps are of Connectivity: Mostly around forest patches, buffer areas

Map of Cost-Distance for wildlife movement from Green Mountains to Middlebury

Map of first attempt at modeling east-west wildlife corridors.

Question and Discussion: Are there ways to incorporate citizens, student groups into recording wildlife data?

A. Sheldon noted that she may be able to dig up some wildlife cameras from previously taught class.

The "Wild Midd" college group may be interested in doing some preliminary tracking

May be possible to incorporate iNaturalist or other tools, do more trainings of how to use.

Question: Are there other factors we still need to map/include in Conservation Plan mapping?

J. Murray- may be helpful to incorporate forest blocks, think about including/limiting parcelization and fragmentation due to driveways, etc.

A. Sheldon- natural communities and soil types

A. L'Roe- There are some broad-scale TNC maps of Resilience that he can send links to

V. Set Next Agenda & Meeting Date

**Next Meeting: December 16<sup>th</sup>- 4:30 pm**

A. L'Roe noted that Ripton Conservation Commission contacted RPC to inform and spread word that UVM Forest Ecologist Bill Keeton is giving "Carbon Friendly Forests" presentation in Middlebury- Thursday February 6 in the Jessica Swift community room at the Ilsley Library- Andrew will send more details when they come.

Adjournment: Amy Sheldon made motion, Kemi seconded

*If you need special accommodations to attend this meeting, please contact the Town Planning Office at 388-8100 x210 as soon as possible.*

*Background information is located on a publicly viewable Google Drive folder at:*

<https://drive.google.com/open?id=0B4Jeh7WII2EzNy1Hek5XcEtiN28>